

Natural Rearing Newsletter [©]

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FOR THOSE THAT CHOOSE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES

From The Desk Of: MARINA ZACHARIAS

An Overview of Vitamins and Minerals

Nutrients can be categorized into two groups.

Macronutrients are nutrients we need in large quantities to sustain us. They consist of water, carbohydrates, protein and fats (lipids). Micronutrients are needed in much smaller quantities, but are nonetheless vital to our existence. These nutrients consist of vitamins and minerals.

VITAMINS:

All natural vitamins are organic food elements found only in living things. Although less than 20 vitamins have been identified so far, each is vital for proper growth and maintenance of health. Each is also present in varying quantities in specific foods. With few exceptions, the body cannot manufacture or synthesize vitamins. They must be supplied in the diet or in dietary supplements.

For the most part, vitamins actually function as coenzymes. (Briefly, enzymes are catalysts or activators in the chemical reactions that take place in the body. See our previous articles for a comprehensive explanation on the importance of proper enzymatic function).

Vitamin deficiencies take time to manifest themselves into physical symptoms. A poorly nourished cell may contain numerous enzymes that lack the proper coenzyme part to function at its optimum. Gradually the cell will go through its paces at a continually slower rate until proper nourishment is received or it finally dies. As cells decline further or die, various tissues and organs will slowly be affected.

Some people believe vitamins can replace food. They cannot. In fact, vitamins cannot be assimilated without ingesting food. That's why we suggest taking them with a meal along with a digestive enzyme.

Vitamins help regulate metabolism, help convert fat and carbohydrates into energy, and assist in forming bone and tissue. Here is a brief summary of the more important vitamins that you can use for future reference purposes. (1)

Vitamin A

Vitamin A or beta carotene is necessary for growth and repair of body tissues; it helps maintain smooth, soft disease-free skin; it helps protect the mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, throat and lungs, thereby reducing susceptibility to infections; it protects against air pollutants; it counteracts night-blindness and weak eyesight; and it aids in bone and teeth formation.

Current medical research shows that foods rich in beta carotene will help reduce the risk of lung cancer and certain oral cancers.

Deficiency symptoms of vitamin A may result in night-blindness; increased susceptibility to infections; rough, dry, scaly skin; loss of smell and appetite; frequent fatigue; lack of tearing; defective teeth and retarded growth of gums.

Vitamin B-1

Vitamin B-1 or thiamin plays a key role in the body's metabolic cycle for generating energy; it aids in the digestion of carbohydrates; is essential for the normal function of the nervous system, muscles and heart; it stabilizes the appetite; and it promotes growth and good muscle tone.

Deficiency of vitamin B-1 may lead to the loss of appetite; weakness and fatigue; paralysis and nervous irritability; insomnia; loss of weight; vague aches and pains; mental depression; constipation; heart and gastrointestinal problems.

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Vitamin B-2

Vitamin B-2 or riboflavin is necessary for carbohydrate, fat and protein metabolism. It aids in the formation of antibodies and red blood cells; it maintains cell respiration; is necessary for the maintenance of good vision, skin, nails and hair; it alleviates eye fatigue; and promotes general health.

Deficiency of vitamin B-2 may result in itching and burning eyes; cracks and sores in the mouth and lips; bloodshot eyes; purplish tongue; dermatitis; retarded growth; digestive disturbances; trembling; sluggishness; and oily skin.

Vitamin B-3

Vitamin B-3, niacinamide or niacin, improves circulation and reduces the cholesterol level in the blood. It maintains the nervous system; it helps metabolize protein, sugar and fat; it reduces high blood pressure; it increases energy through proper utilization of food; it prevents pellagra; it helps maintain healthy skin, tongue and digestive system.

Deficiency of vitamin B-3 may result in pellagra, gastrointestinal disturbance; nervousness; headaches; fatigue; mental depression; vague aches and pains; irritability; loss of appetite; insomnia; skin disorders; muscular weakness; indigestion; bad breath; and canker sores.

Vitamin B-6

Vitamin B-6 or pyridoxine is necessary for the synthesis and breakdown of amino acids (the building blocks of protein). It aids in fat and carbohydrate metabolism; it aids in the formation of antibodies; it maintains the central nervous system; it promotes healthy skin; reduces muscle spasms, leg cramps, hand numbness, nausea; and stiffness of hands. It helps maintain proper balance of sodium and phosphorous in the body.

Deficiency of vitamin B-6 may result in nervousness, insomnia, skin eruption, loss of muscular control, anemia, mouth disorders, muscular weakness, dermatitis, arm and leg cramps, loss of hair, slow learning, and water retention.

Vitamin B-12

Vitamin B-12 or cobalamin helps in the formation and regeneration of red blood cells, thus helping prevent anemia. It is necessary for carbohydrate, fat and protein metabolism; it maintains a healthy nervous system; it promotes growth in children; increases energy; and is needed for calcium absorption.

Deficiency of vitamin B-12 may lead to pernicious anemia, poor appetite, growth failure in children, tiredness, brain damage, nervousness, neuritis, degeneration of spinal cord, depression, and lack of balance.

Biotin

Biotin aids in the utilization of protein, folic acid, and vitamin B-12, and promotes healthy hair.

Deficiency of biotin may lead to extreme exhaustion, drowsiness, muscle pain, loss of appetite, depression and grayish skin color.

Pantothenic Acid

Pantothenic acid participates in the release of energy from carbohydrates, fats and protein, and it aids in the utilization of vitamins. It improves the body's resistance to stress; it helps in cell building and the development of the central nervous system; it helps the adrenal glands, and it aids the immune system to build antibodies.

Deficiency of pantothenic acid may lead to painful and burning feet, skin abnormalities, retarded growth, dizzy spells, digestive disturbances, vomiting, restlessness, stomach stress and muscle cramps.

Folic Acid

Folic Acid is necessary for DNA and RNA syntheses, which is essential for the growth and reproduction of all body cells. It is essential to the formation of red blood cells by its action on the bone marrow; and it aids in amino acid metabolism.

Inositol

Inositol is necessary for the formation of lecithin. It aids in the breakdown of fats; it helps reduce blood cholesterol; and it helps prevent thinning hair.

Deficiency of inositol may result in high blood cholesterol; constipation; eczema; and hair loss.

Choline

Choline is very important in controlling fat and cholesterol buildup in the body. It prevents fat from accumulating in the liver; it facilitates the movement of fats in cells; it helps regulate the kidneys, liver and gallbladder; it is important for nerve transmission; and it helps improve memory.

Deficiency of choline may result in cirrhosis and fatty degeneration of the liver; hardening of the arteries; heart problems; high blood pressure; and hemorrhaging kidneys.

Paba

Paba aids healthy bacteria in producing folic acid. It aids in the formation of red blood cells; it contains sun screening properties; it aids in the assimilation of pantothenic acid; and it returns hair to its natural color.

Deficiency of paba may cause extreme fatigue; eczema; irritability; depressions, nervousness; constipation; headaches; digestive disorders; and hair turning prematurely gray.

Vitamin C

Much has been written about vitamin C and by now you are probably familiar with the majority of its benefits. Briefly, it's one of the major antioxidants and is essential for healthy teeth, gums and bones. It is required for the synthesis of collagen.

Deficiency of vitamin C may lead to soft and bleeding gums; swollen or painful joints; slow-healing wounds; bruising; tooth decay; loss of appetite; muscular weakness; skin hemorrhages; capillary weakness; anemia; and impaired digestion.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D improves absorption and utilization of calcium and phosphorus. It is required for bones and teeth formation; it maintains a stable nervous system and normal heart action.

Deficiency of vitamin D may lead to rickets; tooth decay; softening of bones; improper healing of fractures; lack of vigor; muscular weakness; inadequate absorption of calcium; and retention of phosphorous in the kidneys.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E is a major antioxidant. It retards cellular aging due to oxidation; it supplies oxygen to the blood which is then carried to the heart and other organs, thus alleviating fatigue; it aids in bringing nourishment to cells; it strengthens the capillary walls and protects the red blood cells from destructive poisons; it prevents and dissolves blood clots; it is also used in helping prevent sterility, muscular dystrophy, calcium deposits in blood walls and heart conditions.

Deficiency of vitamin-E may lead to a rupture of red blood cells; loss of reproductive powers; lack of sexual vitality; abnormal fat deposits in muscles; degenerative changes in the heart and other muscles; and dry skin.

MINERALS

As important as vitamins are, they cannot be properly assimilated without the aid of minerals. Although the body can manufacture a few vitamins, it cannot manufacture a single mineral.

Most people associate minerals with the production and maintenance of bones and teeth, but they are needed for much more than that. All body tissues and internal fluids contain varying quantities of minerals. They are important factors in maintaining physiological processes, preserving the vigor of the heart, brain, muscle and nerve systems, as well as strengthening skeletal structures. (3)

Like vitamins, many minerals function as coenzymes, acting as catalysts for numerous biological reactions within the body. These include, the transmission of messages through the nervous system, digestion and metabolism of nutrients in foods, and they are vital in the production of hormones.

Again, here is a brief summary that you can use for future reference purposes.

Calcium

Calcium builds and maintains bones and teeth. It regulates heart rhythm; eases insomnia; helps regulate the passage of nutrients in and out of the cell walls; assists in normal blood clotting; helps maintain proper nerve and muscle function; and lowers blood pressure. Calcium is important to normal kidney function and according to current research, reduces the incidence of colon cancer, and reduces blood cholesterol levels.

Deficiency of calcium may result in arm and leg muscles spasms; back and leg cramps; softening of bones; brittle bones; rickets; poor growth; osteoporosis (a deterioration of the bones); tooth decay; and depression.

Magnesium

Magnesium plays an important role in regulating the neuromuscular activity of the heart and maintains normal heart rhythm. It is necessary for proper calcium and vitamin C metabolism and it converts blood sugar into energy.

Deficiency of magnesium may result in calcium depletion; heart spasms; nervousness; muscular excitability; confusion and kidney stones.

Iron

Iron's major function is to combine with protein and copper in making hemoglobin. Hemoglobin transports oxygen in the blood from the lungs to the tissues, which need oxygen to maintain basic life functions. Iron builds up the quality of the blood and increases resistance to stress and disease. It is also necessary for the formation of myoglobin, which is found only in muscle tissue. Myoglobin supplies oxygen to muscle cells for use in the chemical reaction that results in muscle contraction. Iron also prevents fatigue and promotes good skin tone.

Iron deficiency may result in weakness; paleness of skin; constipation; and anemia.

Iodine

Iodine aids in the development and functioning of the thyroid gland; regulates the body's production of energy; helps burn excess fat by stimulating the rate of metabolism. (Mental function and the condition of the hair, skin, and teeth are dependent upon a well-functioning thyroid gland).

Deficiency of iodine may result in an enlarged thyroid gland; slow mental reaction; dry skin and hair; weight gain, loss of physical and mental vigor.

Copper

Copper is necessary for the absorption and utilization of iron. It helps oxidize vitamin C and works with vitamin C to form Elastin. (Elastin is a chief component of the elastin muscle fibers throughout the body). Copper aids in the formation of red blood cells and helps proper bone formation and maintenance.

Deficiency of copper may result in general weakness, impaired respiration, and skin sores.

Zinc

Zinc is an important antioxidant nutrient that is necessary for protein synthesis and wound healing. It is vital for the development of the reproductive organs, prostate functions and male hormone activity. It governs muscle contraction and is important for blood stability. It maintains the body's alkaline balance; helps in normal tissue function; aids in the digestion and metabolism of phosphorus.

Deficiency of zinc may result in delayed sexual maturity; prolonged healing of wounds; retarded growth; fatigue; decreased alertness; and susceptibility to infection.

Manganese

Manganese is an important antioxidant nutrient. It is important in the blood breakdown of amino acids and the production of energy. It is necessary for metabolism of vitamin B-1 and vitamin E. It activates various enzymes that are important for proper digestion of foods; is a catalyst in the breakdown of fats and cholesterol; and helps nourish the nerves and brain. Manganese is necessary for normal skeletal development and it maintains sex hormone production.

Deficiency of manganese may result in paralysis; convulsions; dizziness; ataxia; loss of hearing; digestive problems; and blindness and deafness in infants.

Chromium

Chromium is important in working with insulin in the metabolism of sugar and stabilizing blood sugar levels. It cleans the arteries by reducing cholesterol and triglyceride levels. It helps transport amino acids to where the body needs them and helps control the appetite. Medical research indicates that low levels of chromium in the body make it more susceptible to having cancer and heart problems and becoming diabetic.

Deficiency of chromium may result in glucose intolerance in diabetics; atherosclerosis; heart disease; depressed growth; obesity; and tiredness.

Potassium

Potassium works with sodium to regulate the body's waste balance and normalize heart rhythms. It aids in providing a supply of oxygen to the brain; preserves proper alkalinity of body fluids; and stimulates the kidneys to (4)

eliminate poisonous body wastes. It assists in reducing high blood pressure and promotes healthy skin.

Deficiency of potassium may result in poor reflexes; nervous disorders; respiratory failure; cardiac arrest; and muscle damage.

Selenium

Selenium is a major antioxidant nutrient. It protects cell membranes and prevents free radical generation thereby decreasing the risk of cancer and diseases of the heart and blood vessels. It preserves tissue elasticity; slows down the aging and hardening of tissues through oxidation; and helps in the treatment and prevention of dry flaky skin.

Deficiency of selenium may result in premature aging; heart disease; dandruff; and loose skin.

In General the quantities listed in the US RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance) are the minimum to prevent disease. These numbers are changed every so often and provide no indication of what the optimum quantities should be.

I can readily understand why this information is not given. In today's fast paced society we are all faced with such a wide variety of stress factors that it is nearly impossible to determine a "one size fits all" optimum factor.

With our animals, the pet food companies supply the only numbers that have been provided. Of course we all know that they must have done a tremendous amount of costly research to ensure that every yummy morsel of their product is just exactly the right mixture to provide the "optimum" nutrition for every dog and cat. This must be true because they say it right on the label don't they? Guess it's a good thing that all our companion animals are exactly the same isn't it! All puppies need the same thing, all our old timers need the same thing, etc., etc. Maybe they should turn their magnificent nutritional "science" to "human" nutrition. Then we could buy a 40 lb. bag of "people kibble" and feed our families the easy way. Think what a time saver that would be!

There's an old saying, "you are what you eat". It should really say, "you are what you absorb from what you eat". Assuming that the digestive system is healthy, we do know that in general, vitamins and minerals from food sources are readily absorbed. The absorption factor of synthetics is questionable and can vary considerably.

The best combination supplement that I have found is called "Spectra" (Da Vinci Laboratories). This product contains 56 nutrients and includes digestive enzymes, amino acids, vitamins and minerals. It is highly recommended by many health care professionals and is the one I use for my family.



VETERINARY TESTS---SOME BASICS

O.K., you've taken your animal into the vet for a checkup and he/she says they would like to run some tests. Come back in a few days and they will have the results. You return and the vet pulls out this lab report that has all these strange initials and a range for what is considered normal for each item and number or a graph for the level that represents the level for your pet's test.

There are several different tests that an orthodox vet can use for diagnostic purposes. Here briefly, are just a few of the basics to help you understand and take the mystery out of the lab report. Again you may want to keep this issue of the newsletter for future reference purposes.

Blood Chemistry

ALB (Albumin):

This is a protein that is produced by the liver. Reduced levels of this protein can point to chronic liver or kidney disease, intestinal disease, or intestinal parasites such as a hookworm infection.

ALT (Alanine Aminotransferase):

This is an enzyme that becomes elevated with liver disease or injury.

ALKP (Alkaline Phosphatase):

This is an enzyme produced by the cells lining the gall bladder and its associated ducts. Elevated levels can indicate liver disease or Cushing's syndrome.

AMYL (Amylase):

This is an enzyme produced by the pancreas. The pancreas secretes amylase to aid in digestion. Elevated blood levels can indicate pancreatic and/or kidney disease.

BUN (Blood Urea Nitrogen):

BUN is produced by the liver and excreted by the kidneys. Abnormal levels can indicate dehydration, and liver or kidney abnormalities.

Ca (Calcium):

Increased levels of calcium can be seen with diseases of the parathyroid gland and kidneys or as an indicator of certain types of tumors.

CHOL (Cholesterol):

Elevated levels of cholesterol are seen in a variety of disorders including genetic disease, liver and kidney disease and hypothyroidism.

CREA (Creatinine):

Creatinine is a by-product of muscle metabolism and is excreted by the kidneys. Elevated levels can indicate kidney disease or a urinary tract obstruction.

GLU (Blood Glucose):

High levels of blood glucose can indicate diabetes. In cats, high levels can simply indicate stress as a result of the

visit to the veterinary hospital. Low levels can indicate liver disease, infection or certain tumors.

PHOS (Phosphorus):

Elevated phosphorus can be an indicator of kidney disease.

TBIL (Total Bilirubin):

Bilirubin is a breakdown product of hemoglobin and is a component of bile. It is secreted by the liver into the intestinal tract. Blood bilirubin levels are useful in diagnosing anemia and problems in the bile ducts.

TP (Total Protein):

The level of TP can detect a variety of conditions including dehydration, diseases of the liver, kidney or gastrointestinal tract.

Hematology

HCT (Hematocrit):

Provides information on the amount of red blood cells (RBC's) present in the blood. This test is used to diagnose anemia.

CBC (Complete Blood Count):

A more complete panel of tests, a CBC provides detailed information on RBCs, WBC's (white blood cells), and platelets. These tests can indicate anemia, infection, leukemia, stress, the presence of inflammation, or an inability to fight infection. Platelets are involved in blood clotting and if low can indicate a bleeding problem.

Morphologic Inspection: This is a long name that simply means looking at the cells through a microscope. This can provide information on the type of anemia, inflammation or other abnormalities such as leukemia.

Serum Thyroid Hormone

This is a measurement of the level of thyroid hormone circulating in the blood. Serious complications can occur if an unrecognized hyperthyroid pet is placed under anesthesia.

Urinalysis

The urine contains by-products from many organs such as the kidneys, liver and pancreas. Abnormal levels of these by-products can indicate disease including diabetes, liver and kidney disease.

Electrolytes

Sodium, Potassium, Chloride:

The balance of these electrolytes is vital to an animal's health. Abnormal levels can be life threatening. Electrolyte tests are important in evaluating vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration and heart symptoms.

There are some things you should be aware of concerning these tests. Firstly, different labs have different measuring systems thus the "normal" range on the report may vary from place to place. So don't panic if someone tells you that an xxx reading for BUN is considered normal and your report shows yyy.

Interpretation of the test results is best left to the health care professional. Unfortunately, conventional medicine tends to ignore imbalances that fall within the "normal" ranges. By the time the values fall outside the range an animal may already have begun manifesting symptoms of a disease and treatment will have to be started.

A more holistic approach is to try to read the tests in a fashion that reflects possible early indications of problems that may occur later on if not addressed now. The concept of prevention rather than treatment is usually uppermost in the mind of the holistic practitioner.

For example, the three values that medically indicate how well the kidneys are functioning are BUN, Creatinine, and Phosphorus. All are waste products from different parts of the body that the kidney is responsible for eliminating. If one or all of these are in the "high normal" or "low normal" range, doesn't it make sense to assume that it is problematic that the kidney is a high-risk target for future problems? Even if no "disease" exists at the present time, doesn't it make sense to provide natural supplements that can bring the levels closer to the mid-range of normal?

It's important that you realize that no single organ operates on its own. Conventional medicine tends to concentrate on the symptoms of the affected organ while ignoring the rest. The fact is that all of the organs are linked to one another. Inevitably, so are their problems.

The challenge for the holistic practitioner is to apply the science of Western diagnostic testing in a very fine tuned manner and attempt to obtain a picture of the overall health of the entire body. If there is a problem, can the underlying cause be determined?

In the above kidney example, the values originate from sources outside the kidney (the waste products from other parts of the body) and may actually indicate other problems. Especially if only one of the three indicators is elevated.

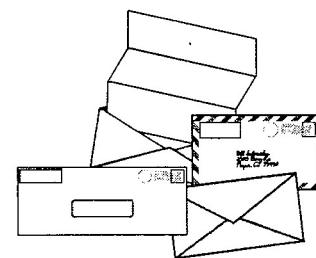
To further increase the challenge, the practitioner must know if the animal has received any drugs prior to the tests. For example, synthetic cortisone can often reflect elevated levels of alkaline phosphatase.

The holistic practitioner will utilize the science of the West and blend it with other fields of study. By bringing all the pieces of the puzzle together the overall picture becomes much clearer and the chances of achieving good health are increased proportionately.



(6)

MAILBOX



For those of you that still vaccinate your dogs, here is another caution on the "brand" of vaccines. This is reprinted with permission of Linda Kenyon (original post was on the internet Terrier list).

Dateline March 28, 2000

On Saturday Feb. 5th, one of our dogs had a very serious reaction to a Distemper vaccine. I have vaccinated our animals for many years using vaccines from Foster Smith.

My most recent order arrived on 2/5/00. In the evening I pulled the vaccines out of the refrigerator, grabbed several new sterile needles, and started vaccinating the dogs. I was using the "Prevent/Vac Canine 7" in single dose vials. This is a private label combination vaccine of distemper, adenovirus, hepatitis, parainfluenza, parvovirus and two leptospirosis.

Cooler (Curly) was first, followed by Skeeter (14 pound Tibetan Spaniel), followed by Yeager (Curly). All of the injections were given subcutaneous on the back of the neck.

As I finished vaccinating, and started to hand out cookies, I noticed that all three dogs were vigorously scratching the injection site. Skeeter was extremely depressed. I checked his gums (white) and his tongue (gray). His respiration was weak and he was reluctant to move.

We rushed Skeeter to the Emergency Vet Clinic, where they identified the reaction as anaphylactic shock. This is a life threatening condition, and we were very fortunate to get help quickly. Skeeter was treated with Diphenhydramine and Dexamethasone.

Upon returning home, the Curlies still looked O.K. I popped Benadryl down them, just to help delay any reactions. Over the course of the next few days, the intense scratching of the injection site continued. All of the dogs developed huge hard knots at the injection site: 2 inch lumps on the Curlies, a lump about ½ inch on Skeeter. I have been told that the knots may take several weeks to clear up, if they didn't abscess first.

I phoned Foster & Smith and talked with Dr. Joe Bowdewes at some length. Dr. Joe handles all of the phone calls regarding drug reactions. Foster & Smith used "Diamond Laboratories" as the manufacturer for their private label vaccines for many years. Dr. Joe said that he averaged about one phone call per month regarding allergic reaction to a Diamond vaccine. These reactions were typical allergic reactions (swelling of the face and general discomfort several hours after the injection).

Diamond recently sold this division to another company, who discontinued the product line. Approximately three months ago Foster & Smith switched over to "Biocor Animal Health" as the manufacturer for their private label. Since switching over, Dr. Joe has had about one phone call per week. **That is a 400% increase !!!** I was actually the second call this week....and most of these reactions are life threatening. Anaphylactic shock reactions within minutes of administering the vaccine.

Dr. Joe said that they are experiencing problems with both the "Prevent Vac Canine 5" (no leptospirosis) and the "Prevent Vac Canine 7" (with 2 leptospirosis). Dr. Joe suspects that the sensitizing agent is in the fluid carrier. These are the only two vaccines that Foster & Smith buys from Biocor.

Dr. Joe gave me the phone number of the chief vet at Biocor. I talked with him for quite a while. A nice enough fellow, but he stated that his data showed a "statistically acceptable" level of vaccine reactions.

Dr. Joe suggested that I avoid any vaccine made by Biocor. He said that Foster & Smith is viewing this as a very serious problem and is putting heavy pressure on Biocor for answers and preventive measures.

If any of you vaccinate your own dogs, please check the labels for any Biocor vaccines. I have learned that Biocor sells to other mail order companies besides Foster & Smith, as well as selling to vet clinics under the trade name of "Commander". If you have any questions please feel free to call Dr. Joe Bodewes at Foster & Smith (715-369-2022).

Feel free to pass this information along to anyone else. I am not trying to slander Biocor Animal Health. I am just trying to prevent anyone else from going through this vaccine reaction.

We were fortunate---our dog lived through the experience.

Statistically acceptable??? Yeah, right! What does that mean?? I find the callous attitude exemplified by this company (and others) just for the sake of an almighty buck is abhorrent to the very nature of health care. I would like to see all the people on the staff of every one of these companies vaccinated on an annual basis with their (statistically safe) own product and see what happens when an adverse reaction happens. Do you think that would change their attitude? Nah, there I going with my wishful thinking again. (7)

Dateline April, 2000

Texas

Hi Marina, Just wanted to thank you again for your help with Sherlock, my 5year old Golden.

As you know, he was a friendly (sometimes overly so), happy go lucky dog that simply loved everyone he came in contact with. That is, until about six months ago.

His attitude started to change about then and gradually he went from our loving companion to an overall miserable animal. He became somewhat aggressive, started snapping for no apparent reason, did not want to be touched and appeared fearful if anyone approached him.

In desperation, I called you on the off chance that you might know of some way to help him overcome what was obviously a severe behavioral problem.

After a lengthy discussion and trying to pinpoint the time we noticed the first changes, you suggested that it was possibly due to the Rabies vaccination he had received shortly before the changes.

After giving the remedies you sent us we saw some good response very quickly and within two months we had our old dog back. I'll never be able to thank you enough for this.

I just wanted to let other people know that there can be consequences from this shot that may be obscure and therefore never suspected to be related to the Rabies vaccination.

In this case we gave Thuja, Lyssin, Viratox and Detoxification factors to detoxify from the vaccine adjuvant and support the liver phases. We also used Immuplex and Laktoferron to boost the immune system and fight the underlying infection created from the vaccine.

Over the years, I've seen this type of behavioral reaction a few times from a Rabies or a Distemper vaccination.. These shots can affect the neurological system to the degree where meningeal reactions occur. I've also seen other central nervous system disorders, such as seizures, caused by these vaccines. Fortunately, we have been successful in treating many dogs with seizure activity from vaccination reactions.

There is a growing awareness of the various vaccine issues. However, we still need to persevere to help the evolution in mainstream veterinary practice. We still have a long way to go to convince most vets that the practice of routine, annual vaccinations needs to be seriously re-examined and evaluated on the basis of the possible harm that can be done relative to the "assumed" benefit. Early indications from a study being done at Purdue University indicate that they have found evidence of a link between vaccinations and autoimmune problems. Dr. Jean Dodds has been saying this for years and finally others are admitting the possibility.

Things are changing thanks to caring people like yourselves. Keep up the good work gang. The effort is worth it!

The Road to Natural Rearing

"Remember that every ounce, every particle of food contributes to the strength of puppy limbs, therefore let every meal given be of maximum health in natural concentration and preparation.

A properly weaned puppy is a joy to see and possess. It has come into the world with a set of brand-new organs: heart, brain, liver, kidneys, etc. All are new, clean and unspoiled. It is each puppy's right that it be fed foods which will not damage or degenerate its new body, but improve and safeguard its health, so that it will never know the pain and distress of worm infestation, rickets, scouring, skin eruptions."

---Source: Juliette de Bairacli Levy

About 15 years ago, these words started me on the road to Natural Rearing. Little did I realize at the time that this road would lead me to several other pathways and that one day I would be able to help others in many different ways.

In the beginning, Juliette's "The Complete Herbal Handbook for the Dog and Cat" helped me acquire the knowledge that there was another way of raising animals and treating illnesses. Books by George Macleod, Christopher Day, and Richard Pitcairn opened up the world of Homeopathy to me. Although I scoured the libraries for anything to do with natural ways of dealing with our animals, that was all I could find at that time.

Today I am often asked where a person can learn about all the things I talk about. As I look at the many shelves of books I have acquired over the years (both for animals and humans) and the hundreds of copies of various periodicals, along with the virtually unlimited resources to be found on the Internet, I can't help but think how lucky we all are to live in an age when such a bountiful abundance of information is available to anyone that takes the time to study it.

The downside to this is that for a newcomer the sheer volume of information can be overwhelming. Sometimes (particularly with the questions of diet and vaccinations) there are conflicting opinions that serve to confuse matters. The reliability of information on the internet ranges from excellent to downright dangerous and without any background knowledge it can be difficult for the newcomer to distinguish the difference.

In Volume 3 Issue 2 (May/98) we suggested a few basic articles from previous newsletters that would serve as a good starting point in beginning the road to Natural Rearing. This is also available on our web site under the section "Journey in Learning".

Many of the subscribers to our newsletter are already well on their way down the road and many have taken slightly different paths to arrive at a better health care system than offered by conventional "wisdom". I fully realize that sometimes, despite having adequate knowledge on what is best for our animals, compromises must be made. As long as this is an informed decision, I have no argument with that. The law says we must vaccinate for Rabies. So be it. At least we have the knowledge to offset the worst aspects of this shot.

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Cautions to consider

There are a growing number of animal owners that are choosing to do titer testing rather than revaccinate on a routine basis. A word of caution is important here. If the titer test comes back as very low or nothing, don't jump to the conclusion that another vaccination is in order. I would suggest you wait 6 months and have the animal retested. We have had several reports where a titer test indicated little or no antibodies and 6 months later a repeat test indicated everything was fine even though no further vaccination was done. Thank goodness for our breeder network that informs us of so many different things that most would never hear of.

For example, last summer we published an article warning you about the dangers of Rimadyl. In March of this year the Wall Street Journal finally caught on and published an article on the subject. (A little late fellows!) Evidently, Pfizer has pulled their TV and magazine ads after the FDA wanted them to include the word "death" in their side effect warnings. They chose to stop advertising.

The latest pharmaceutical fiasco concerns a "Heartworm preventative" called **REVOLUTION!!** We are starting to get reports in that indicate that in the last month at least two dogs have died after application of this new 'wonder drug'. Symptoms appear to be the same as ingesting some kind of poison.

Although it's a little early to tell how widespread this problem is going to be, please exercise extreme caution if your vet recommends this particular preventative to you. One report that we received concerning the death of a two year old Australian Shepherd within a few days of applying Revolution is both detailed and shocking. Bleeding from the nose, vomiting with streaks of bright red blood, followed by seizures are some of the horrible consequences experienced in this particular case. If you or anyone you know has a similar experience, please make sure it is reported to the FDA.

I haven't seen the "side effects" pamphlet that comes with Revolution but I'll bet it doesn't say a thing about "death" as a possible result of using it! It will be interesting to see if this particular product is the next one in a long list of drugs that can cause more harm than the disease they were designed to treat or prevent.

I know we all want the best for our animals but as each year passes it is becoming more and more evident that the large corporate pet suppliers care more for bottom line profits served with a huge dollop of promotion than for the health and welfare of our companions.

So it's up to each and every one of us to not only take care of our own but to also let others know that there is a better way. Natural Rearing may not have all the answers but the road is a lot smoother.

"Till next time, take care out there.